CANADA DOUBLES TOTAL NUMBER OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

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Your essential daily news | MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2015

METRO READERS SAY
Relax liquor laws
metroVIEWS

High 4°C/Low 2°C Periods of rain

Bhavna Bajaj, an Ottawa lab technician, has been battling to have her son, Daksh, now 4, join her in Canada. She had not informed immigration officials when she became pregnant while in India.
CONTRIBUTED

MILES APART

Mistake leaves parents, son on different continents

metroNEWS

Weatherman dashes hopes of Christmas snow

HOLIDAYS

Warmer-than-usual winter to continue into spring, says meteorologist

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

A white Christmas is "out of the question" for Ottawa as we head toward double-digit temperatures on Christmas Eve.

"It's impossible to get any snowflakes before Christmas Day," said Environment Canada meteorologist Simon Legault.

The long-range forecast shows a balmy high of 12 C on Thursday, Dec. 24 and a daytime high of 3 C on Christmas Day. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday this week will all be above zero.

There's no white stuff in the forecast until Boxing Day, which, if snow comes, would be the first significant snowfall of the season.

"That's really the extraordinary event of this year," said Legault. December's average temperature so far is 5.8 C, about 10 degrees higher than average.

The warm weather is caused by the El Niño effect, which brings milder winters when the Pacific Ocean near South America is warmer than usual. The phenomenon, named for baby Jesus since the effect kicks in around Christmas, is almost as strong as in 1998, the same year the Great Ice Storm walloped eastern Canada.

Legault said he expects the warmer-than-usual winter to continue into spring. It's not that it won't be cold, he said, but the capital might see fewer days below -20 C.

As for this year's green Christmas, it's a pretty rare event. Environment Canada data found that four out of five (or 80 per cent) Ottawa Christmases have had snow since 1955.

Between 1955 and 2007, 35 of 52 Christmas mornings were considered "perfect" — they had at least two centimetres of snow on Christmas morning, and snow also fell during the day.

Over the past 10 years, only one Christmas counted as truly perfect: 2013 had 33 centimetres on the ground, and 1.5 centimetres fell that day, Environment Canada shows. But five of those years had more than 20 centimetres of snow cover: 2013, 2012, 2008, 2007 and 2004.

19 cm
Ottawa's average snow fall on Dec. 25

Six Christmases were below zero, three had Christmas snowfalls and two others endured a mix of rain and snow. Only 2014 was truly green.

Legault said this year, Ottawa should get closer to normal winter temperatures between Christmas and New Year's Day.

He predicted New Year's Eve revellers will face temperatures between -5 C and 0 C.

A small weather system is tracking to hit sometime between Dec. 27 and 29, which could bring rain or snow.

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Take a tour through some of Canada's historic heritage homes. **Canada**

Sandy Hill All Saints church sold to local community group

DEVELOPMENT

Residents hope site becomes mixed-use urban space

Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

An Anglican church in Sandy Hill that went up for sale last summer has been sold to a group of residents who plan to turn the building into a community hub on Laurier Avenue.

The details of the sale were announced Friday by Leanne Moussa, part of a group of Sandy Hill residents who raised the funds to purchase the building as part of the "Save the Saints" working group.

"Historically churches have served as community hubs and we think that's a role it can continue to play," said Moussa, who worked with Susan Young and Diane Whale to make the purchase and organize investors from Alberta and Ottawa.

The sale means Sandy Hill's T.A.N. Coffee Shop, which closed this weekend after its lease ended, may also find a new home.

The cafe is planning on moving into the space at the church in 2016.

Moussa said the old church would undergo some renovations to become a space for multi-faith worship and a conference centre with service for weddings and catered events.

"There are some changes we'll need to be making in the building but surprisingly it is laid out for the types of uses we're hoping for," she said.

"We see this as a way to reshape Laurier Avenue."

"Obviously we'll have to make some changes to pay the bills," said Moussa. "We'd like to see it become a centre for political discourse. There may be other conferences there but we'd like to see it focused around public policy issues and civil society groups.

The former church building will also be the new hub for the Prime Minister's Row project, which plans to attract both tourists and locals interested in the capital region's history.

The second part of the property, Bate Hall, will remain a community resource space but is planned for eventual mixed-use development in the future, according to Moussa.

The Anglican Diocese put the property up for sale in August of last year, asking for $1.7 million. The property was identified by DTZ Canada real estate as a potential development opportunity.

The building is over a century old and is in the heart of a neighbourhood where a number of historic buildings have been converted into rooming houses.

The old church has hosted a royal wedding in its 113-year history and boasts stained glass memorials to former prime minister Robert Borden and veterans.

"Our vision is to create a vibrant urban space that will serve residents and tourists alike," said Moussa.

HOLIDAY SEASON POLICE SERVE CHRISTMAS MEAL TO SHELTER PATRONS Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau serves juice to patrons at the Ottawa Mission's annual Christmas dinner on Sunday afternoon. More than 600 pounds of mashed potatoes, 2,500 pounds of turkey and 50 gallons of gravy were served to thousands of shelter visitors on Sunday. HALEY RITCHIE/METRO

LABOUR

Jail staff on the verge of striking in January

Correctional officers at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre could be looking at a January strike date if an agreement isn't reached with the province soon.

On Friday, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), representing the province's correctional officers, filed a "no board" report, putting workers in a potential strike position.

This comes after 93 per cent of workers at the local jail voted to reject a tentative deal proposed by the province.

"Talks have broken down and the government is not interested in a fair deal," said Denis Collin, president of the local chapter.

> **"The government is not interested in a fair deal.**
> Denis Collin, OPSEU

A statement released by deputy premier Deb Matthews and Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services Yasir Naqvi Dec. 10 stated the situation was "disappointing."

"We will continue to work with all our corrections staff as we move forward with our mandate to transform our correctional system," officials said in their statement. HALEY RITCHIE/METRO

5 THINGS TO WATCH FOR AT CITY HALL IN 2016

Lucy Scholey
Metro | Ottawa

City hall operations will wind down for the holidays, only to gear up for a busy 2016. It's a packed agenda, with more issues than we have included here — the hookah ban, the LeBreton flats redevelopment, the ramp-up to Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017. Here are five things worth following:

1 The library's next chapter

The city is moving ahead with plans to build a new public library, after council approved $3.9 million for procurement. It's a three-phase process that started in July of this year. The library board will review the next steps in early 2016. If all funding comes through in the private-partnership agreement, shovels won't hit the ground until 2018.

2 Beach season

Unless you're heading south for the holidays, you're probably not torturing yourself with mental images of lying on a beach. But here's something to look forward to: the city is considering extending its beach season beyond the 58-65 day limit next summer. Sunbathers and picnickers can only hope the city won't send its lifeguards home during a heat wave, like they did this past year.

3 Uber vs. taxis

It was a tumultuous year for taxi drivers: protests against ride-hailing app Uber, protests against employer Coventry Connections over airport pickup fees, and videos of drivers smashing cabs and threatening Uber drivers. It had Mayor Jim Watson calling for an expedited review of the taxi bylaw (the last review was in 2006), which may include new rules for ride-hailing technologies.

4 Industrial turns innovative

The first phase of the Innovation Centre on Bayview Road will open next fall. Invest Ottawa's new home will be a snazzy remake of the 70-year-old industrial building, with commercial offices, a digital media lab and café. Think the Communitech entrepreneur incubator hub in Kitchener. The second phase includes a 12-storey tower.

5 Revitalizing a neighbourhood

Earlier this year, Gloucester-Southgate Coun. Diane Deans said councillors "failed" Albion-Heatherington when they voted to hold off on spending $250,000 to "revitalize" the low-income community. She wants to transform the neighbourhood into a mixed-income community, as has been done in other North American cities. Council instead voted to explore all at-risk neighbourhoods worthy of the pilot project. The committee — which includes Deans — is expected to choose a community early in the New Year.

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Mohamed Khalil, a Lees resident, started the petition.
EMMA JACKSON/METRO

Citizens win with petition

TRANSIT

Revised routes 'definitely a good change': Lees resident

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

OC Transpo has expanded service at Lees station after 300 residents signed a petition protesting cuts last week.

The station's lower level is being shut down for light-rail construction, and most Transitway buses were going to skip Lees as of Sunday.

The 85 was supposed to only head north beginning at 7:05 a.m. on weekdays, and the 16 would begin downtown service at 6:16 a.m.

That wasn't early enough for Lees residents who begin work earlier, said Mohamed Khalil, who started the petition with his neighbour asking OC Transpo to rethink its cuts.

There also wasn't enough connectivity to the south or west ends, he said, meaning passengers had to go east to St-Laurent station, and then backtrack west and south, to reach their intended destination.

The transit operator posted revised service levels for Lees station to its website on Friday.

It noted that the changes were being made "in response to community feedback."

Starting Monday, the 85 will make three extra morning trips downtown at 4:34, 5:59 and 6:32 a.m. Beginning Jan. 4, two new late-night trips at 10:32 and 11:22 p.m. will also head north from Lees.

300

The number of signatures collected by Lees resident Mohamed Khalil demanding service to accommodate morning and weekend travel.

Seven extra eastbound and southbound routes — 8, 86, 87, 92, 94, 96 and 106 — will now serve the station between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. on weekdays, and all day on weekends.

The 97 will also take passengers south 24/7.

"It's definitely a good change," said Khalil on Sunday.

The petition received fairly strong support from the community. Khalil sent more than 50 paper signatures and 249 online signatures to transit planning manager Pat Scrimgeour last week.

MARIJUANA

Wynne wants federal help on pot policy

Ontario is looking for federal government guidance on regulating clinics that sell medical marijuana and on how pot should be sold for recreational use once it's legalized.

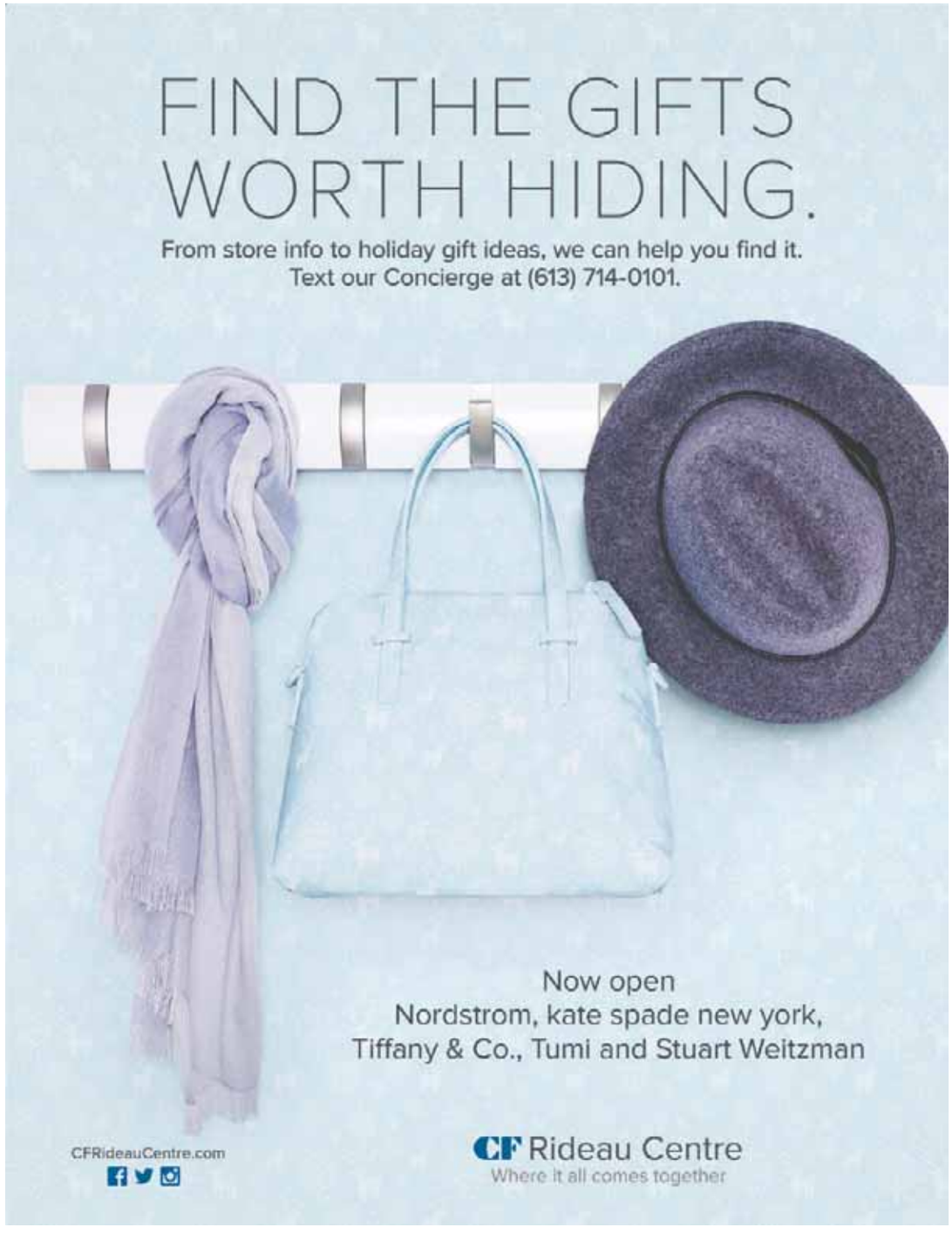
The new federal government plans to remove possession of small amounts of marijuana from the Criminal Code and create new laws to more severely punish those who provide it to minors or drive while under its influence.

Premier Kathleen Wynne says there hasn't been enough discussion about the distinctions between medicinal and recreational marijuana, which is one reason she suggested Ontario's government-run liquor stores would be well-suited to retailing legalized pot.

"The reason I put forward the LCBO as the possible distribution network is that I want to make it clear that I see the need for a socially responsible approach to this," Wynne told The Canadian Press in a year-end interview.

"I think that this needs to be a controlled substance — and I don't use that in a technical way — but there need to be controls on it, and so I will be looking to the federal government to work with us to determine what those controls need to be," she added.

"Not all marijuana is going to be medicinal, so we've got to make distinctions between a clinic that is providing medicinal marijuana and what the recreational distribution is going to be," she said. THE CANADIAN PRES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‘Mistake’ keeps couple from son

IMMIGRATION

Four-year-old remain in India while parents are in Ottawa

It was the biggest mistake of their lives — and their little boy is paying the price.

Bhavna Bajaj found out she was pregnant while she and her husband were in the midst of applying to immigrate to Canada under the federal skilled worker program.

While waiting for the application to be processed, Bajaj gave birth to their only child, Daksh, in June 2011. She said she emailed her immigration consultant from her hospital bed to alert Canadian officials of the arrival of the little one.

Instead, she said, the South Africa-based online immigration consulting firm they were using advised the couple to sponsor their son after their application was approved and they had arrived in Canada.

That turned out to be a huge mistake, one that’s haunting Bajaj and her husband, Aman Sood, because Canada’s immigration department bars any family member not included at the time of application from being sponsored to Canada in the future — a fact the couple learned only when they landed at the Montreal airport in January 2013.

And worse, Bajaj, now a medical lab technician in Ottawa, said they felt pressured by customs officials into signing a declaration that “we would never sponsor our child.”

For two years, the parents have been fighting unsuccessfully to reunite with Daksh, who is now four and being cared for by his grandparents in Shimla in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh.

Aman Sood with son Daksh CONTRIBUTED

“They were given the wrong advice and made a tragic mistake. We are not saying the law is on our side. By law, there is no excuse for the couple,” said the family’s current lawyer, Hadayt Nazami, who is based in Toronto. “But they wouldn’t have excluded the child. I see no reason the inclusion of the child in their application would have caused any problem for their immigration. The boy was healthy and wouldn’t have been inadmissible for any medical or security reason.”

An immigration department spokeswoman, Nancy Caron, said the “objective of the regulations is to encourage honesty and full disclosure” in the application process. “This provision has been consistently upheld by the courts as it helps prevent immigration fraud and human trafficking.

The couple’s numerous attempts to bring Daksh to Canada — under family sponsorship and humanitarian and compassionate applications — have been rejected.

“Your parents failed to declare you as a dependent child at the time of the processing of their application for permanent residence in Canada. Upon arrival in Canada, your parents signed a declaration that they would not sponsor you in the future,” the High Commission of Canada in New Delhi said in a letter to Daksh. “Therefore, you are excluded as a member of the family class.”

While immigration officials agreed the immigration minister could make an exemption if humanitarian considerations such as “the best interests of a child directly affected” were justified, they concluded in August 2014 that there were “insufficient humanitarian and compassionate factors.”

“Based on the information submitted in the application, it appears that the child never resided with his parents and continuously resided with his grandparents,” said the immigration department’s Caron.

“The child was living in an environment which was culturally and linguistically familiar to him, among people who had cared for him since birth. The humanitarian and compassionate considerations were refused.”

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> **“Aman and I just cry all the time. We come home from work and don’t even talk to each other because our child can’t be with us.**
> Bhavna Bajaj

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Inside official residences

HERITAGE

The stories behind some of Canada's historic homes

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's first post-election decision was to leave 24 Sussex Drive vacant so that the aging official residence in Ottawa can undergo critical renovations.

It's a historic home — all the more so because Trudeau grew up there and will likely move back in before the end of his four-year term. But it is just one of the nation's official residences, each of which holds pieces of Canada's heritage.

Government House in St. John's. CONTRIBUTED

1 Government House
St. John's
One of the oldest official residences in Canada, the two-storey red sandstone building was built for Sir Thomas Cochrane, as a condition of his appointment as Governor of Newfoundland. Twenty-eight masons and 25 carpenters brought in from Scotland built the structure between 1827 and 1831. Government House has served as the home of the province's lieutenant governor since the province became a part of Canada in 1949. It cost $746,800 to run in 2013-14.
SOURCE: 2014 NEWFOUNDLAND BUDGET

Victoria's Government House CONTRIBUTED

2 Government House
Victoria, B.C.
The current building opened in 1959 after fires destroyed the two previous residences of the province's lieutenant governors in 1899 and 1957. The estate has served as the home of the Queen's representative since B.C. joined confederation in 1871. On the grounds is a bronze statue of Sir James Douglas, considered the founder of B.C., and Hosaqami, a 24-foot totem pole originally commissioned to celebrate the relationship between the Canadian and British navies. Total annual cost last year was $1.328 million.
SOURCE: 2014 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Gov.-Gen. David Johnston at La Citadelle. CONTRIBUTED

3 La Citadelle
Quebec City
Few of Canada's official residences better embody the occupant's official symbolic function than La Citadelle, the star-shaped military fortress built between 1820 and 1832. The Governor General of Canada, whose primary residence is Rideau Hall in Ottawa, has occupied a residence and a wing of offices on the grounds of the base since 1872 when Lord Dufferin occupied the post. Costs for 2014 to 2015 totalled $746,122.
SOURCE: PUBLIC WORKS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES CANADA

Stornoway COLOURPIX.COM/ TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

4 Stornoway
Ottawa
The official residence of the Leader of the Official Opposition, Stornoway was built in 1913. During the Second World War when it served as the home of the Dutch heir to the throne, Princess Juliana and her family, who went into exile after the Nazi invasion of 1940. After the war, in 1946, Conservative Senator Grattan O'Leary began fundraising for a trust that would buy and maintain a residence for the federal opposition leader. The owners made Stornoway available for $55,000. It was taken over by the federal government in 1970 and has annual costs of $54,715.
SOURCE: NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

IN BRIEF

Defence minister visits Iraq, reports say
Canada's defence minister is visiting Iraq, just days after Canadian military forces helped push back a major Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) offensive on Thursday.

Kurdish media are reporting that Harjit Sajjan spent Sunday in the town of Irbil in a visit not announced by the Canadian government in advance Images show Sajjan meeting with Kurdish officials in Irbil. THE CANADIAN PRESS

No UN Security Council seat for Canada just yet
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has all but ruled out a return for Canada to the powerful United Nations Security Council any time before 2019.

That's because other western European countries in the UN group to which Canada belongs have declared their intentions to run, effectively filling up the ballot up to 2020 and beyond.

Canada lost loss a seat on the council in 2010 to Portugal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Cities to tame their maligned freeways

It was a mid-century effort to launch Vancouver into the modern age — an elevated roadway made up of tonnes of concrete cutting through the city's shiny downtown core to serve the almighty automobile.

The failed attempt ultimately became a saving grace.

After the colossal Georgia Viaduct was built in 1972, a grassroots uproar stopped the construction of what would have been a multi-lane expressway.

The City of Vancouver voted last month to tear down the twinned bridge while discussion continues over construction of a new street network below it.

6.5
Number of hectares the Cogswell Interchange occupies on prime ocean-side real estate in Halifax. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Other Canadian cities, such as Halifax and Toronto, are also contending with their own white elephants of infrastructure — vestiges of the freeway-building craze in vogue during the 1960s and 1970s that inspired public uprisings.

"It's not overstating it to say that it was citizen protest against the plans for those expressways that had a lot to do with the salvation of Canadian inner cities," said Christopher Leo, professor emeritus of urban planning at the University of Winnipeg.

Leo said the particular brand of planning logic originated in the United States as part of a Cold War project aimed at protecting America from the Soviet threat by extending a reliable transportation network across the country.

"Part of the idea of it was that you wanted to build overpasses high enough that you could run tanks under them," he said, though that initial reasoning served less of an impetus in the Canadian experience."

Vancouver's former chief planner Brent Toderian said that as cities such as Vancouver re-imagine their downtown spaces, they face "possibly the most powerful city-making moments in the Canadian urban landscape."

"These opportunities are too important to squander with even an average result," he said. "It starts with tearing them down." THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Trump Hotel in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

POLL

Dump Trump name

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

If Donald Trump depended on Canadian voters for his presidential run, he'd be in for a rough ride.

A new Angus Reid poll suggests the majority of Canadians would like the controversial real-estate mogul's name scrubbed from hotel towers in Toronto and Vancouver.

Toronto and Vancouver residents overwhelmingly support the idea of ditching Trump's name from the buildings — 62 per cent of those polled — while nationally the approval stands at 56 per cent.

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The rising flow of Syrian refugees

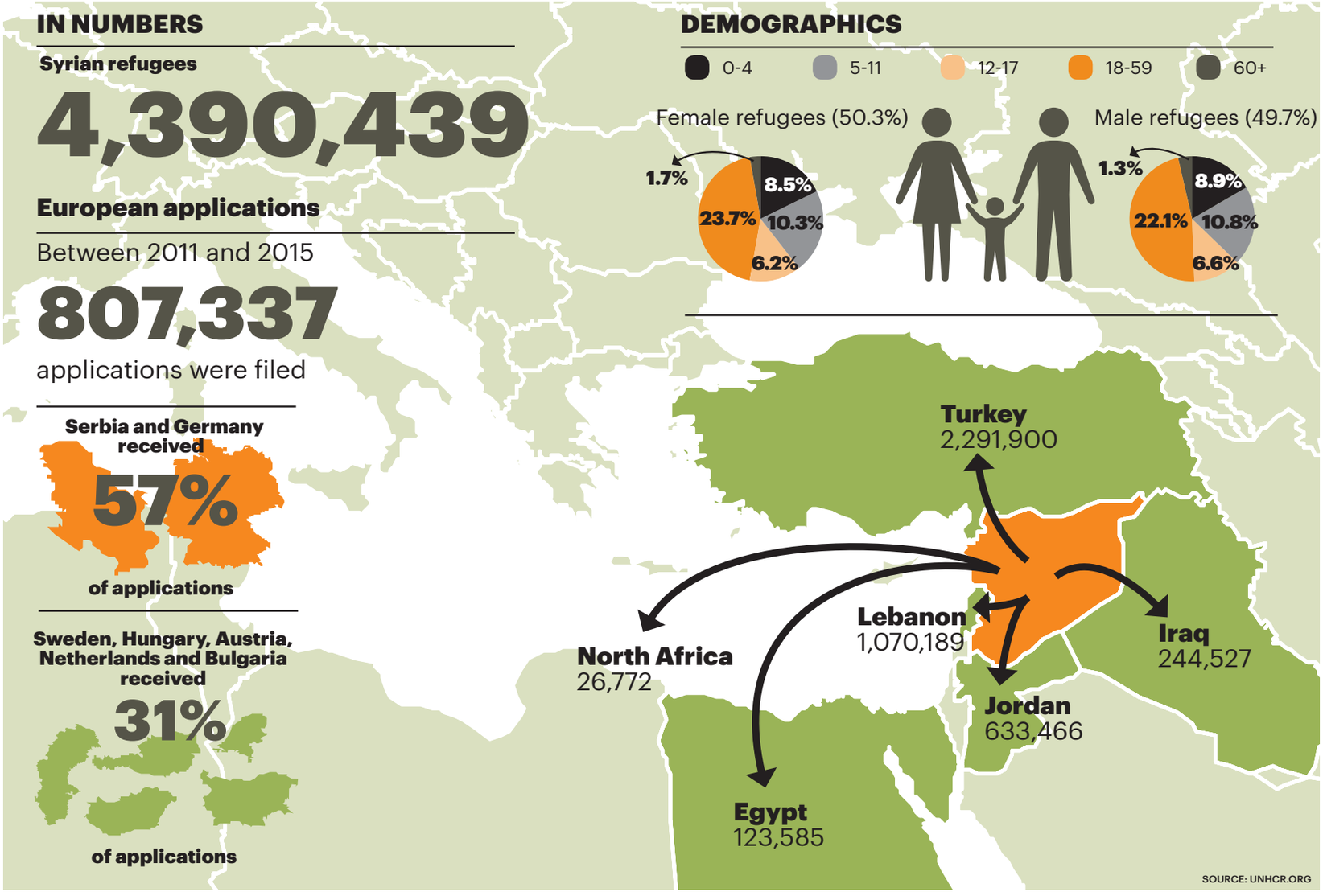
With hundreds of thousands killed, millions internally displaced and millions more fleeing war-torn Syria, the mounting refugee crisis has been called the largest in recent history. But who is most likely to flee their home country? And where are they going instead? The numbers tell a harrowing tale.

METRO

LATE NEWS

Canada's minister of immigration and citizenship, John McCallum, says the country's resettlement program for Syrian refugees could double its intake by the end of 2016 to 50,000.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



DEPORTATION

Jordan forces out Sudanese asylum seekers

Ahmed Doury and his wife had fled their home in Sudan's Darfur region for safety in Jordan. But after Jordanian security forces violently rounded up and deported them and other Sudanese asylum seekers, the 32-year-old says he's now more determined than ever to go to Europe.

"I will take the sea ... I will get out of here by any means necessary," he said Sunday, adding that it was the only thing he could think about on the flight back to Sudan.

Speaking by telephone from the Sudanese capital of Khartoum, he recounted the deportation with a solemn voice.

Doury had gone to Jordan in 2014, fleeing death threats for his tribal and ethnic ties in the war-devastated Darfur region. He registered as a refugee with the United Nations and worked intermittent menial jobs in the Jordanian capital, Amman, to support himself and his wife.

Feeling discriminated against by authorities, the two joined a makeshift camp outside the UN headquarters where other Sudanese were living. On Wednesday, Jordanian security forces stormed the camp, tore it down and forced the asylum seekers onto vans headed to the airport.

> **"I will take the sea ... I will get out of here by any means necessary.**
> Ahmed Doury

The camp's proximity to the UN headquarters had given the group a false sense of safety, he explained.

"We have no trust in the UN anymore after what happened. No one did anything to help us," Doury said, echoing a view widely held among Sudanese refugees in Jordan.

"Everyone was beaten ... they stepped on the people who fell down," he said.

On Friday, they were put onto planes taking them back to Sudan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IDLIB

Airstrikes kill dozens in northwestern Syria

Two opposition monitoring groups say airstrikes on the northwestern Syrian city of Idlib have killed at least 32 people and wounded many others.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said warplanes believed to be Russian struck several areas including the offices of rebel groups, killing 36 and wounding many others. It said the dead included fighters.

The Local Coordination Committees said Russian airstrikes in Idlib killed 32 and wounded 140.

Russia began an air campaign in Syria on Sept. 30, saying its airstrikes are meant to weaken the Islamic State group and other "terrorists," but Western officials and Syrian rebels say most of the strikes have focused on central and northern Syria, where the Islamic State group does not have a strong presence.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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INDIA

Protesters decry release of gang rapist

A man convicted as a juvenile in the fatal 2012 gang rape of a young woman aboard a moving bus in India's capital ended his three-year term in a reform home Sunday, as angry protesters demanded that he remain in detention.

The man was short of his 18th birthday when he and five others brutally attacked the 23-year-old woman in a case that shocked India.

Several activists and politicians have demanded that he not be released until it can be proven that he has been reformed.

On Friday, the Delhi High Court rejected a petition to extend the man's term. The man was moved Sunday from the reform home where he had been kept to a new home under the care of a children's rights group.

In December of 2012, the woman and a male friend were returning home from seeing a movie when they were tricked by the attackers into getting on the bus, which the men had taken out for a joyride.

The attackers beat the victim's friend and raped her. They penetrated her with a rod, leaving severe injuries that led to her death two weeks later.

The case ignited a debate about whether minors who commit especially horrific crimes should be tried as adults. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Students shout slogans in protest against the juvenile's release. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Passengers who were on board the Air France plane forced to land in Mombasa, Kenya, react after they were officially informed of the bomb scare. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bomb scare grounds jet

SAFETY

Fourth hoax in recent weeks for Air France

A fake explosive rigged with cardboard, sheets of paper and a household timer forced an Air France flight carrying 459 passengers and 14 crew members into an emergency landing in Kenya on Sunday, sending passengers down emergency slides in what the airline's CEO said was the fourth bomb hoax against the airline in recent weeks.

The Boeing 777 was heading to Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris from the island of Mauritius when its pilots requested an emergency landing early Sunday at Kenya's coastal city of Mombasa.

The homemade apparatus was discovered at midnight hidden in a washroom cabinet where it was placed during the approximately 11-hour flight, said the airline's CEO, Frederic Gagey.

He congratulated the crew for their cool-headed reaction. Passengers were also impressed.

"They keep everybody calm. We did not know what was happening," said Benoit Lucchini.

Six passengers were being questioned, including the person who informed the crew about the device, said a Kenyan police official.

Gagey decried the hoaxes.

> **We find this behaviour stupid, damaging and unacceptable.**
> Frederic Gagey, Air France CEO

"This is behaviour that for me is criminal. It sows doubt, it disrupts our operations, it inconveniences passengers, and obviously each time we can get information about those who are responsible for these extremely bad jokes, pardon the expression, we file a legal complaint," Gagey said. "We find this behaviour stupid, damaging and unacceptable." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Spain's ruling party wins
An exit poll projects that Spain's ruling Popular Party has won the general election but is shy of the votes it needs for a majority. A poll for the state-owned RTVE channel gave the Popular Party 26.8 per cent of the vote. Turnout was 58.4 per cent. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southern China landslide leaves 27 people missing
A landslide at an industrial park in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen on Sunday buried buildings and left 27 people missing, authorities said. Seven people were rescued, but 21 men and six women were unaccounted for. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Growth is top of list

FINANCE MINISTERS

Morneau to discuss Liberal promises at Ottawa talks

Provincial and territorial finance ministers, meeting in Ottawa with federal counterpart Bill Morneau, hope to come away with a better understanding of the government's election promises, which touch on a broad range of issues likely to impact the provinces.

The agenda includes Liberal promises of public-pension reform, infrastructure spending and a revamped child-benefit plan. But with the country's economy struggling to rebound from the negative effects of low commodity prices, there's an overarching theme Morneau says he would like to focus on.

"The main subject I'd like to talk about is growth," he said recently when asked about the meeting.

"We will be spending time talking about infrastructure and how we can best make infrastructure investments together with the provinces. And as I said, we're going to talk about Canada Pension Plan enhancement and how we might be able to work together in that regard."

The Liberals also pledged to provide billions of dollars worth of funding for the provinces, territories and municipalities for infrastructure projects such as public transit. The party argues that such investments are crucial to firing up Canada's weakened economy and to creating jobs.

While it may not appear on the official agenda, Morneau is expected to field questions from the other ministers about health care and the need to figure out how to grapple with its mounting costs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

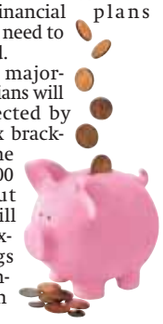
HOLIDAY TRADITION LOBSTER EXPORTS TO EUROPE PLUNGE Live lobsters are packed at the Maine Lobster Outlet in York, Maine, for shipment to Europe where they are a Christmas tradition in several countries. But a strong U.S. dollar and a less-than-festive economy overseas mean fewer lobsters are making it onto European tables. Lobster's status as a luxury item, coupled with rising prices because of competition from Chinese importers and a weak euro, is motivating some consumers to stay away — even if they can afford it. Some in the American lobster industry suspect European business will be off more than 25 per cent this year. ROBERT F. BUKATY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PERSONAL FINANCE

Income tax rules changing

The tax rules are changing in 2016 and even if Canadians don't make enough to be hit by the new top federal income tax rate, their financial plans are going to need to be reviewed.

The vast majority of Canadians will not be affected by the new tax bracket for income over $200,000 a year, but everyone will see their tax-free savings account contribution limit be reduced back to $5,500 for 2016.



Tax-free savings limit being scaled back. ISTOCK.COM

Peter Bowen, vice-president of tax and retirement research and solutions at Fidelity Investments, says for many people this might be the most important tax planning season they've ever had.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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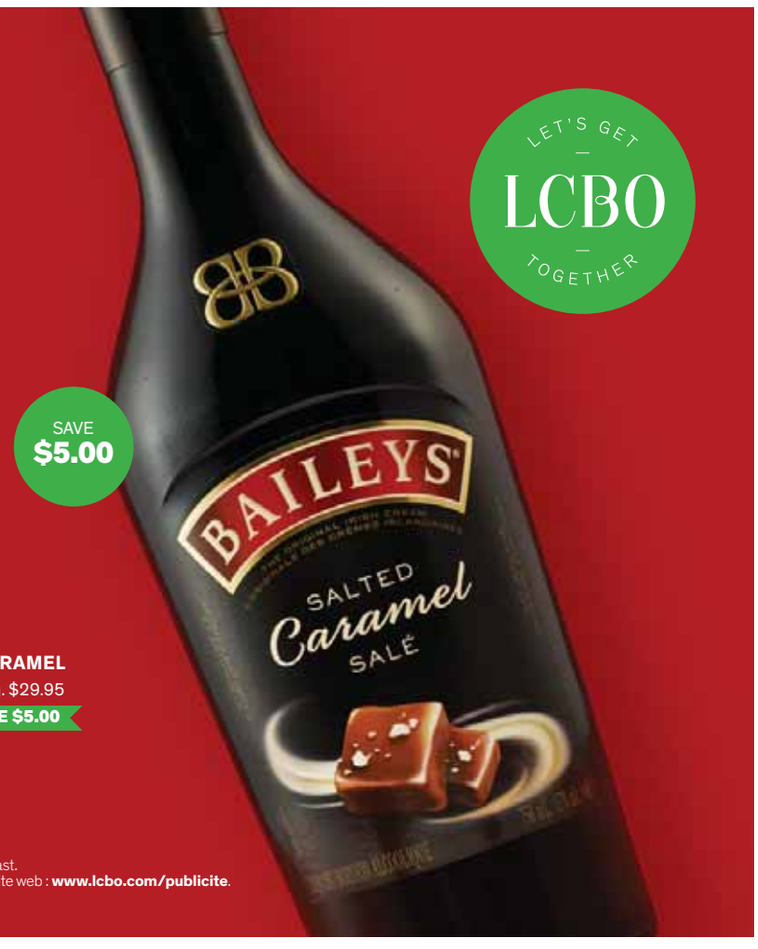


metro VIEWS

Your essential daily news

Monday, December 21, 2015

That's barking
A new biophysics study explains why dogs can't drink without making a mess (it has to do with the surface area of their tongues).

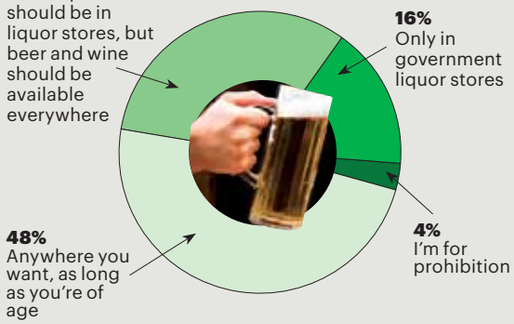
Metro MONDAY POLL

Liberalizing liquor

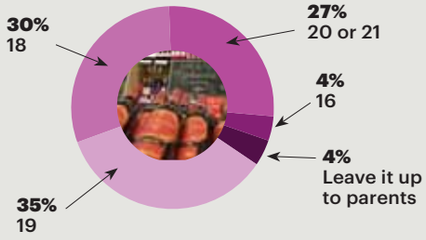
Visit metronews.ca **every Friday to have your say.**

In the past week, Ontario took a few cautious steps towards liberalizing alcohol sales in the province; allowing beer to be sold in select grocery stores. But worries about the effect of alcohol on public morals have persisted for a century or more, and the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union has expressed concerns that easily available beer and wine will increase violence against women. We asked our readers from all provinces if they want to be able to buy alcohol anywhere, or if they're for temperance or even T-total prohibition.

1 Where should you be allowed to buy alcohol?


32%
Hard liquor should be in liquor stores, but beer and wine should be available everywhere
16%
Only in government liquor stores
48%
Anywhere you want, as long as you're of age
4%
I'm for prohibition

2 What should the drinking age be?



3 What are your concerns about alcohol being sold in commercial stores?

32% It will be easier for minors to get alcohol
15% It will reduce tax revenue
15% It will be hard for people who are trying to stay sober
10% It will increase violence or crime
28% Other

It should be sold wherever it can be, but I am in favour of stricter warning labels about the health effects.

The system works well already. Why the need for change?

If teenagers want booze, they'll get booze. We did!

The store could be accountable for giving alcohol to someone who is underage or already inebriated.

WE ASKED Metro readers

We made progress in 2015, Ottawa. Not bad.

COLLINS' CAPITAL

Steve Collins

The timing seems slightly off this year as we say goodbye to 2015, here in the middle of this protracted autumn.

An unusually warm, gentle November and December have left us mostly unharassed by the elements, but the Christmas lights have seemed feebler against the night without snow to reflect their glow, and the Salvation Army is blaming a shortfall of donations on the naked ground, which has seemingly deprived donors of their annual cue for altruism.

On the plus side of the ledger, the city hopes to bank as much as a million bucks in savings in snow clearance and related expenses should the weather hold off the way it has for the rest of the month.

No fan of winter, I've seen every snowless day as a bonus, but the little frosting that landed on Lansdowne Park Saturday night held an undeniable magic as I caught the new Star Wars movie (I will honour the ongoing spoiler embargo and say no more) and took stock of what got better in 2015.

For starters, last year this outing would have involved a commute out of the city core. We'd lost the last of our downtown multiplexes, in the Rideau Centre and World Exchange Plaza, in 2013.

The redevelopment of Lansdowne hasn't always gone smoothly. The neighbours endured construction and traffic tribulations and taxpayers looked sideways at a complex, sole-sourced deal which is already proving to be less lucrative for them than advertised.

But this year, we started to see it pay off in nights like this, whether you're taking in a game, a movie, dinner, or a stroll. One of these years, a (still-unfunded) pedestrian bridge across the canal between Fifth and Clegg should make it easier for more of us to enjoy Lansdowne.

In the meantime, pedestrians and cyclists chalked up a win for 2015, with the opening of the Adàwe Crossing bridge over the Rideau River. On budget ($9.2 million) and six months ahead of schedule, the bridge, according to a city count, logged 20,000 pedestrian trips in its first 10 days.

I added to that total, as did the preoccupied-looking woman with the stroller I passed, and the cyclist intensely focused on some point in the distance, both with their minds on the destination rather than the bridge that helps them get there, already taking it for granted. I made my crossing after visiting a buddy in Sandy Hill for a drink at his neighbourhood pub and an enthusiastic word about the bridge, which at a stroke has doubled his options for nearby grocery shopping on foot. (Neither supermarket currently carries beer, but now this, too, is in the realm of possibility).

The year's been a little rougher on transit riders, as shutdowns of the Transitway began for LRT construction (including a pile of route changes starting this week for Hurdman and Lees stations) but a smoother-travelling 2018 grows ever closer.

We also saw serious movement towards a new central library, confirmed a new bike lane for O'Connor Street and will soon see proposals for development of the long-neglected LeBreton Flats.

Not bad, 2015. Not bad at all.

Steve Collins lives in Ottawa. He might also be the guy behind you on the bus, pretending not to notice you're reading this. Act casual.

metroview

The remedy for Christmas heartbreak is Christmas itself

Michael Coren
For Metro

In a handful of anticipation-soaked days, those of who are Christian will celebrate the birth of the Son of God. Whether it was in a stable and precisely when it happened is not the point. No, the first issue is that for those of who believe, the birth of Christ changed everything. The second is what should that mean for those who aren't Christian?

It breaks my heart that Christians are so often perceived — entirely understandably — not as followers of the Prince of Peace and He who personified love but as angry reactionaries obsessed with right-wing politics and obscure issues rather than with spreading joy.

Breaks my heart when I see Republican candidates, most of them insisting they are devout Christians, boasting how many bombs they will drop, how many people they will kill and dismissing child casualties as collateral damage.

Breaks my heart when I see Canadian Christians shouting hysterically about abortion, spreading falsehoods about vitally necessary sex education curricula and opposing gay equality. By the way, some of the finest Christians I have ever met have been gay, because they have felt the sting of persecution.

They have shared in Christ's torment.

Breaks my heart when I hear extreme Christian leaders arguing that refugees should be blocked from entering North America, claiming that social justice and redistribution of wealth have nothing to do with the faith or demanding less gun control and more expenditure on the military.

If it breaks this pathetic heart, what does it do to He whose birth we are about to remember, and who demanded that we turn the other cheek, love our enemy and embrace our oppressor?

Jesus turned the world upside down. In defeat is victory, in poverty is wealth, in suffering is contentment and in humility is glory. His words were so transforming that they make the manifestos of the secular revolutionaries appear placid and passive.

For the non-Christian, Christmas is a time to reboot, relax, embrace family, perhaps consider what you believe — or don't believe — through the prism of this winter festival. Whatever your religion or lack of it, the sense of goodwill is impossible to avoid, and that's sparkling in its rarity. For me, however, I will bend the knee, pray thanks and ask forgiveness. My heart may be broken, but there is one who can fix it. For all of us. Merry Christmas.

Whatever your religion or lack of it, the sense of goodwill is impossible to avoid.

metro
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Your essential daily news

Real Housewives' star Teresa Giudice to be freed from prison before Christmas

The funny thing about disease is ...

PODCAST

Haligonians tackle stigma with humour

Brian Stever, left, Jeremie Saunders and Taylor MacGillivary are the hosts of the Sickboy Podcast. Saunders has cystic fibrosis and put together a show that takes a lighthearted approach to talking about the disease. TIM KROCHAK/FOR TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Jeremie Saunders has the kind of rock hard abs gym rats would kill for.

He doesn't work out.

"It's because I cough so much," said Saunders, who lives with cystic fibrosis. "There's all these perks to CF. It's the worst disease. It's so awful. It's such a bummer. But. ... I have a really killer six pack."

It's this ability to see the positive in a brutal illness that has made Saunders and his two buddies, Taylor MacGillivary and Brian Stever, the popular hosts of a boundary-pushing new podcast, called Sickboy. Episodes take on the sentiment of Saunders' own devil-may-care approach to sickness as the Halifax trio tackle everything from anorexia to cancer to PTSD. They post one episode a week featuring interviews with subjects who alternate between bursts of laughter and heartfelt confessions.

"We're just kind of exploring and looking for the humour in an otherwise dark situation," said Saunders, a 27-year-old actor and yoga teacher, in a phone interview. "What we are laughing at is the absurdity of illness."

And they don't sugarcoat it.

The first episode details one of Saunders most embarrassing experiences as a teen.

"I remember coming in to do this barium enema and I've got the most gorgeous doctor," he recalls. "I was like oh my God this is amazing… until she pulls out this giant tube with a balloon attached to it. And then she has to stick that thing up my butt."

He goes on to detail the unfortunate experience of walking to the washroom with fluid leaking from his anus… all the while he and his co-hosts laugh uncontrollably.

Today, Saunders calls this humour his "therapy." But he hasn't always been so eager to open up. As a teen, he was ashamed of the disease that gave him uncontrollable coughing fits and forced him to take pills every time he ate. He felt weird and acted out by refusing to take his medication — a move that sometimes landed him in the hospital.

> **We don't have the same comfort level with illness as we do with other social topics. People panic.**
> Andrew Henderson, Sickboy Podcast guest

Coupled with that was a number hanging over his head. Doctors told his parents he wouldn't live to see 25. Today, the median age for Canadians living with CF is around 50. The podcast has risen from small potato beginnings. They recorded the first podcast in a Halifax library on a whim back in June and launched a Kickstarter campaign that netted $13,000, helping them build a recording studio at Stever's home. Sickboy garnered 25,000 downloads in 90 days and was named one of iTunes best of 2015 Canadian podcasts.

One of their guests was Andrew Henderson, a 27-year-old who lives with lymphoblastic lymphoma.

"You rarely hear this young voice… talking about illness in a fun, positive way," said Henderson, who brought a bottle of champagne to the Toronto interview. "I just want a pamphlet that says, 'Live your f—ing life. Go to the club, party.'"

Henderson has the same blunt, humorous approach to disease as the Sickboy guys do.

When he stops joking about cancer, it wins, he said. But he also understands the podcast might be hard for otherwise healthy people to listen to.

"We don't have the same comfort level with illness as we do with other social topics. People panic," Henderson says, thinking of the times he shared his diagnosis with friends. "What I got a lot of the time was pity, which is really isolating."

That fear around conversations about illness is exactly what Saunders, MacGillivary and Stever hope to tear down. It's the reason why they don't sidestep personal questions, censor swearing or edit out the numerous male genitalia jokes.

"We want to eliminate the awkwardness and discomfort that sometimes comes with speaking about illness. It just adds to stigma and shame and embarrassment," Saunders says.

They respect that not everyone who's sick is going to be ready to joke — and they're adamant that they recognize the seriousness of disease — but they see more benefit in tackling tough issues with infectious laughter than they do in avoiding talking about sensitive subjects.

Indeed, healthcare experts say there are measurable benefits to adopting a positive attitude, both physiologically and psychologically. People who have positive emotions tend to have lower blood pressure, less stress and better sleep, experts say.

And if that attitude seems entirely out of reach for someone who's sick, "change it up," advises Saunders. Read a different book, listen to different music or watch a new TV show — it's better than the alternative, he said.

"You can choose to be taken down and dragged down because of your circumstances and that's a really easy route," Saunders said. "But there's something so much more liberating in trying to find the humour in that dark situation."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MANITOBA

Recent snow could be enough to save endangered butterfly

Scientists are hoping Manitoba's recent heavy snowfall could hold off what they feared might be the final blow to one of Canada's most endangered animals.

Last week's dump that left 19 centimetres of white stuff on the southern grasslands may have provided enough of a fluffy blanket for the butterfly to get through the winter.

"That definitely alleviates some of the stress," said Cary Hamel of the Nature Conservancy of Canada. "That snow is one of the major reasons they can survive over our very harsh winters. Without it, we're nervous."

Skipperlings — an unassuming, orange-and-brown butterfly the size of a loonie — once fluttered widely over the tall grass prairie of southern Manitoba and the central United States. It was so common that surveyors wouldn't bother to count it as they tracked the fate of other butterflies.

Then, something happened.

"Since 2001, it's just been blinking out at site after site after site," said Hamel.

"Five, six, seven years later they still haven't seen it. And in some of the sites where they're hanging on, they're only seeing one or two or three or 10."

A survey this year found only about three dozen adult skipperlings in Manitoba, and not so very many more in the U.S.

What's going on?

"We don't know," Hamel said.

"Lots of people are working on the sites where they're still hanging on, trying to figure out what the commonalities are and what's going on with the sites where they've disappeared."

Despite its former abundance, little is known about the skipperling.

"We know that it only exists in high-quality native tall grass prairie," Hamel said. "We know it really likes black-eyed Susans."

Scientists do know that skipperlings spend the winter as caterpillars, huddled among grass stems and leaf trash on the prairie floor. Snow is thought to be their only protection against cold temperatures and dry winds.

Hamel acknowledges experts may be wrong about the skipperling's need for a blanket of white. But given how many other bugs survive the winter that way, it seems likely.

Until a few days ago, that blanket was thin and patchy. The lucky snowfall is a reminder of how precarious is the skipperling's hold on life.

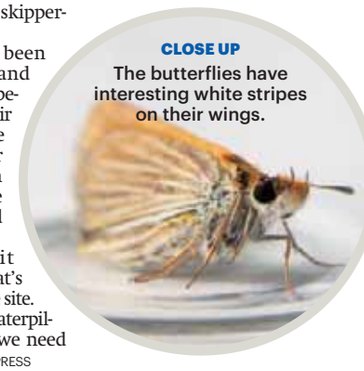
Skipperlings have been around a long time and have seen dry winters before. But Hamel said their low numbers and the distance between their sites have made them so vulnerable that one catastrophic event could wipe them out.

"If none make it through the winter, that's it. They're gone from the site.

"Every one of these caterpillars counts now. And we need them all." THE CANADIAN PRESS

CLOSE UP

The butterflies have interesting white stripes on their wings.



JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Jonesing for Jessica's soul

THE SHOW: Jessica Jones (Netflix) Season 1 Episode 2
THE MOMENT: The Smile

Krysten Ritter as the eponymous Jessica Jones and Mike Colter as Luke Cage. CONTRIBUTED

Secret superhero-turned-private eye Jessica Jones (Krysten Ritter) has a confession to make. She's been sleeping with her handsome neighbourhood bartender, Luke Cage (Mike Colter). But tonight she has to tell him the truth: She's also been tailing him for a client. They face one another in his dimly lit bar.

"So the night you came to my place, that was part of this job?" he asks, angry and hurt.

"I shouldn't have done that," she replies, looking at him steadily.

"Because it's messed up? Or because you got caught?" he asks.

"Both," she answers.

"Get out of here," he growls. "Stay the hell away from me."

She wants to say more. But she turns on her heel and goes.

Ritter's delivery of that single syllable, "Both," is an example of what makes her, and this show, so terrific. She says it with a small smile. It's just a flash, but it communicates volumes: She's embarrassed and sheepish. She's trying to appear tough. She likes him, and she likes him for asking the question. But if you blink, you miss it all.

Part of the joy of watching a hard-boiled character is catching the tiny moments when she cracks and let you in, and Ritter is a genius at that.

Jessica's superpowers don't make her invulnerable; they simply mean we don't have to worry about her body as she prowls the back alleys of New York's gritty Hell's Kitchen. But we worry about her soul, because Ritter makes us want to.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

RECORD BREAKERS

Latest Star Wars a Force at box office

To say that the force is strong with this one isn't nearly enough.

Studio estimates on Sunday say Star Wars: The Force Awakens brought in a galactic $238 million over the weekend, making it the biggest North American debut of all time.

The Walt Disney Co. earnings destroy the previous opening record set by Jurassic World, which drew $208.8 million this summer.

$120.5 M

Estimated amount the Walt Disney Co. said Star Wars: The Force Awakens made from Thursday night previews and opening day Friday.

A few other movies tried to compete against J.J. Abrams' seventh chapter in George Lucas' space saga.

Almost a galaxy away, the animated Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Chip came in second with $14.4 million

In third place, Tina Fey and Amy Poehler's comedy Sisters earned an estimated $13.42 million. A whopping 79 per cent of audiences were female for the R-rated comedy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Force Awakens sets an opening day record. CONTRIBUTED

GOSSIP AMBER'S NATURAL ASSETS, TINA'S PAST

Rose says ass real

Amber Rose hears all that noise you're making about photos of her in tights that hint at some padding on her infamous rear.

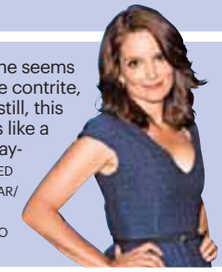
"LOL, I am not wearing booty pads! Damn, y'all all in my ass doe," she wrote on Instagram.

"It's a full-body trainer that has thick lining in it for women's problem areas. I wear it when I work out and it keeps my skin tight and makes me sweat more. I would tell y'all where I got it but I'm making my own MUVA, one for u ladies to enjoy. You know I look out for my girls." NED EHRBAR/FOR METRO

Fey was a mean girl

Watching Mean Girls you might think Tina Fey became an expert in mean girl behaviour by being on the receiving end of it. But you would be wrong. It turns out that Fey herself was a mean girl. Can you believe it? "I admit it openly," she tells the Edit. "That was a disease that had to be conquered. It's a bad coping mechanism.... If I meet a girl of 14 or 15 today who is that kind of girl, I am secretly, in my body, afraid. Even though I'm 45."

She seems to be contrite, but still, this feels like a betrayal. NED EHRBAR/FOR METRO



Handset Sale this week.

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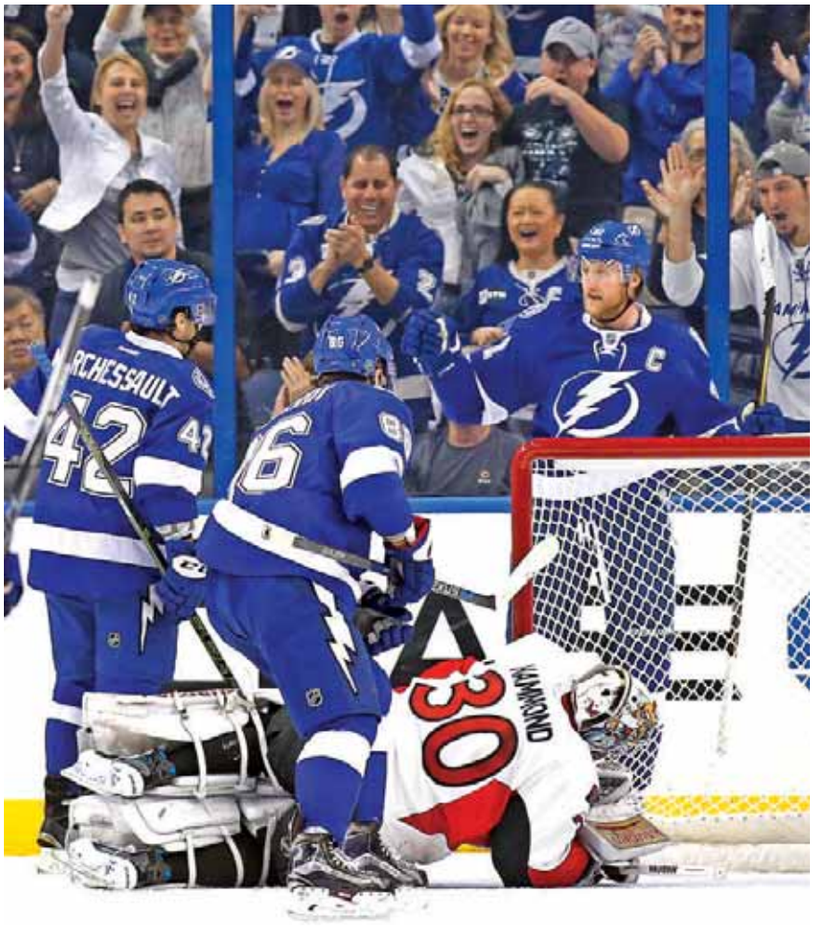
Sidney Crosby is dealing with a lower-body injury and could miss Pittsburgh's game Monday night against Columbus

Bolts shake up Sens



Lightning centre Steven Stamkos, right, celebrates his goal with teammates in front of Senators goalie Andrew Hammond on Sunday. BRIAN BLANCO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Angelidis ends goal drought; Stamkos scores pair for Tampa

Mike Angelidis scored his first NHL goal in almost four years and the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the Ottawa Senators 5-2 on Sunday.

The Lightning also got a pair of goals from Steven Stamkos, including one of two late empty-netters. Nikita Nesterov and Alex Killorn had the other Tampa Bay goals.

Tampa Bay defenceman Victor Hedman assisted on Nesterov's goal for his 200th NHL point.

Zack Smith and Erik Karlsson scored for the Senators, who have lost six of their last seven road games.

Angelidis, playing in his second NHL game this season and 12th overall, made it 3-1 at 2:45 of the second period when he beat Andrew Hammond during a goalmouth scramble. It was the second career goal for Angelidis, with the other coming against Columbus on Jan. 24, 2012.

The goal was upheld after a coach's challenge for goalie interference by Ottawa's Dave Cameron. Both teams had a goal during Tampa Bay's three-minute power play stemming from a five-minute interference call on Mark Borowiecki for a hit on Brian Boyle 1:40 into the game.

Boyle's head hit the glass and he also cut his nose. He left the game and didn't return.

Borowiecki also received a game misconduct.

After Smith scored the Senators' eighth short-handed goal this season at 4:20, Nesterov tied it on his first goal in 15 games 63 seconds later.

Stamkos, who stopped a 10-game goal drought in Friday's 5-3 loss at Washington, made it 2-1 at 7:16 of the first while Smith was off for tripping.

Hammond, playing in his second game since returning from a mid-November injury, stopped Valtteri Filppula's backhander on a penalty shot midway through the third.

Karlsson pulled Ottawa to 3-2 on a shot from the blue line that got past goalie Ben Bishop just after a power play ended with 5:32 left in the second.

Killorn and Stamkos had the empty-net goals.

Ottawa winger Bobby Ryan (hand) and defenceman Cody Ceci (upper body) both left with injuries. The Lightning played without a number of injured players, including Tyler Johnson, Ondrej Palat, Cedric Paquette, J.T. Brown and Jonathan Drouin. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SUNDAY in Tampa

5	2
LIGHTNING	SENATORS

NHL IN BRIEF

Jagr moves up all-time scoring chart in Panthers' victory over Canucks

Jaromir Jagr scored his 732nd goal to move past Marcel Dionne for fourth place in NHL history, and Aleksander Barkov tallied the winner in the shootout as the Florida Panthers beat the Vancouver Canucks 5-4 on Sunday.

Barkov scored against Jacob Markstrom, who entered the game after Ryan Miller left with an injury after allowing a goal on two shots in the shootout.

Jared McCann scored in the shootout for Vancouver, but Roberto Luongo stopped Sven Baertschi to seal the win. Aaron Ekblad, Vincent Trocheck and Shawn Thornton also scored for the Panthers. Luongo stopped 34 shots. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spooner earns shootout win as Bruins beat Devils

Ryan Spooner scored the lone shootout goal and Jonas Gustavsson made 29 saves to lift the Boston Bruins over the New Jersey Devils 2-1 on Sunday.

Loui Eriksson had a goal in the first period for Boston, which improved to 11-1-3 in its last 15 games and pulled within one point of first-place Montreal in the Atlantic Division.

Andy Greene scored in the second for the Devils, who have managed only five goals in the last five games. They've dropped three straight and four of five. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WORLD JUNIORS

Canada cuts four to finalize roster

Montreal Canadiens draft pick Noah Juulsen was among four cuts made by Hockey Canada on Sunday as it finalized its world junior roster in Finland.

Jeremy Lauzon of the QMJHL's Rouyn-Noranda Huskies was the other defenceman cut by Canada.

Jayce Hawryluk of the WHL's Brandon Wheat Kings and Nick Merkley of the Kelowna Rockets were also released by the team.

"We had a really good evaluation period in Toronto and Imatra, and were able to see how the players responded to different situations — from practices to games," said Scott Salmond, VP of hockey operations and national teams for Hockey Canada.

"These are never easy decisions, but we feel confident in the team we have and their ability to make the nation proud."

VS. CZECH REP.

Mackenzie Blackwood recorded the shutout as Canada blanked the Czech Republic 1-0 on Sunday in an exhibition play.

The Canadian roster features three goaltenders, including Calgary Flames draft pick Mason McDonald, MacKenzie Blackwood of the OHL's Barrie Colts and Samuel Montembeault.

Defenceman Joe Hicketts is among those to make the team. He's one of four returnees from last year's team that won gold at the tournament held in Toronto and Montreal. Toronto Maple Leafs prospect Mitch Marner is one of 13 forwards to make the team. Jake Virtanen, who was loaned to Canada from the Vancouver Canucks on Dec. 13, also made the team and is another returnee from last year.

"These are never easy decisions, but we feel confident in the team we have.

Scott Salmond, VP of hockey operations and national teams for Hockey Canada

The Canadians open on Boxing Day against the United States. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Noah Juulsen, drafted by the Canadiens in June, was sent home from Finland on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES FILE

ELSEWHERE

Seahawks 30, Browns 13
Russell Wilson threw three touchdown passes, two to Doug Baldwin, and the Seattle Seahawks clinched a playoff spot for the fourth straight season with a home win over the Cleveland Browns.

Patriots 33, Titans 16
Tom Brady threw for two touchdowns to help New England hold onto the top spot in the AFC in a game that saw Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota knocked out of the game with a knee injury in the first half.

Redskins 35, Bills 25
Kirk Cousins equaled his career high with four touchdown passes and ran 13 yards for another score, helping Washington win consecutive games for the first time in more than a year and stay atop the NFC East.

The Bills are now assured of missing the postseason for the 16th year in a row, the NFL's longest active drought.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Close call casts a shadow

NFL

Carolina goes 14-0 as early lead holds vs. New York rally

SUNDAY At New York

38	35
PANTHERS	GIANTS

After one of the strangest and nastiest games this NFL season, Cam Newton had an odd feeling.

His Carolina Panthers had just shrugged off a record-tying Giants comeback to remain perfect with a wild 38-35 victory Sunday. Newton, who threw for five touchdowns to further state his case as NFL MVP wasn't quite sure what he'd just been through.

"It was kind of a weird feeling in that locker room, and I'm still feeling kind of weird, but not enough to (not) celebrate," said Newton, who also rushed for 100 yards. "We're just trying to find a way to get victories."

New York tied the score after trailing by 28 points in the third quarter, but the Panthers got to 14-0 on Graham Gano's 43-yard field goal as time expired.

It was Carolina's 18th straight regular-season win. Newton has thrown for 19 touchdowns in the last five games and a career-best 33 in this so-far special season.

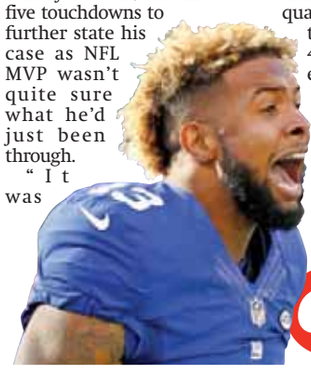
It looked oh so easy when Carolina led 35-7 with 5:32 left in the third quarter. Then the Giants (6-8) matched San Francisco's 28-point rally — from the same score — against New Orleans in 1980.

One big difference: The 49ers won that game in overtime. The Giants trail Washington by one game in the NFC East, and have lost in the final minutes six times.

Carolina visits Atlanta and hosts Tampa Bay to finish the schedule. All three previous NFL teams to reach 14-0 — Miami in 1972, New England in 2007 and Indianapolis in 2009 — made the Super Bowl. Only the Dolphins won the championship, though.

"These last two games are division opponents, and we'll be in a hostile environment in Atlanta," Newton added. "And we've got a tricky week with Christmas. We just have to find a way to keep moving ahead and make sure we stay on the right side of the pendulum." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carolina quarterback Cam Newton runs the ball against the Giants on Sunday in East Rutherford, N.J. AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES



He's got the maturity of a little kid.
Carolina safety Josh Norman on Giants receiver Odell Beckham Jr., pictured. Beckham had multiple run-ins with the Panthers Sunday, including a vicious helmet-to-helmet hit on star cornerback Norman.

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Miguel Angel Britos takes down Liverpool's Christian Benteke on Sunday at Vicarage Road in Watford. IAN WALTON/GETTY IMAGES

PREMIER LEAGUE

'Big' Reds cut down by upstart Hornets

SUNDAY In England

3	0
WATFORD	LIVERPOOL

Jurgen Klopp was left wondering how he can get Liverpool winning consistently after his side were emphatically beaten 3-0 by Watford in the Premier League on Sunday.

Two goals in the first 15 minutes from Nathan Ake and Odion Ighalo swiftly established a deserved advantage for Watford, and Ighalo sealed victory with his second strike five minutes from the end at Vicarage Road.

Defeat leaves Liverpool five points behind Tottenham who occupy the fourth and final Champions League berth. Watford, which has now won four consecutive league games, is up to seventh, a point behind Spurs.

"We lost our mind after the first goal, we lost our compact formation," Klopp said.

Elsewhere on Sunday, manager-less Swansea drew 0-0 at home to West Ham at the Liberty Stadium in Wales.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SOCCER IN BRIEF

Blatter, Platini's FIFA fates hang in the balance
Judgment day for Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini dawns Monday when FIFA's ethics court is expected to ban the scandal-scarred soccer body's most powerful leaders.

The FIFA president and his one-time intended successor face being kicked out of the world's most popular sport for at least several years over a $2 million payment Blatter approved for Platini in 2011.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canadian women's lead evaporates in Brazil
Janine Beckie scored the first goal but host Brazil responded with three of its own, including two from Monica, for a 3-1 victory over Canada on Sunday in the final of the international women's soccer tournament in Natal.

Monica's first goal of the game, on a header off a corner kick in the 63rd minute, stood as the winner as Brazil remained undefeated in the four-team tournament.

The Canadians' only other loss in the event was against Brazil in the final game of the preliminaries.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RECIPE Chickpea and Spinach Stew

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Celebrate Meatless Monday with this Spanish-style stew. It will taste even better as leftovers for tomorrow's lunch.

Ready in
Prep time: 30 minutes
Serves 6

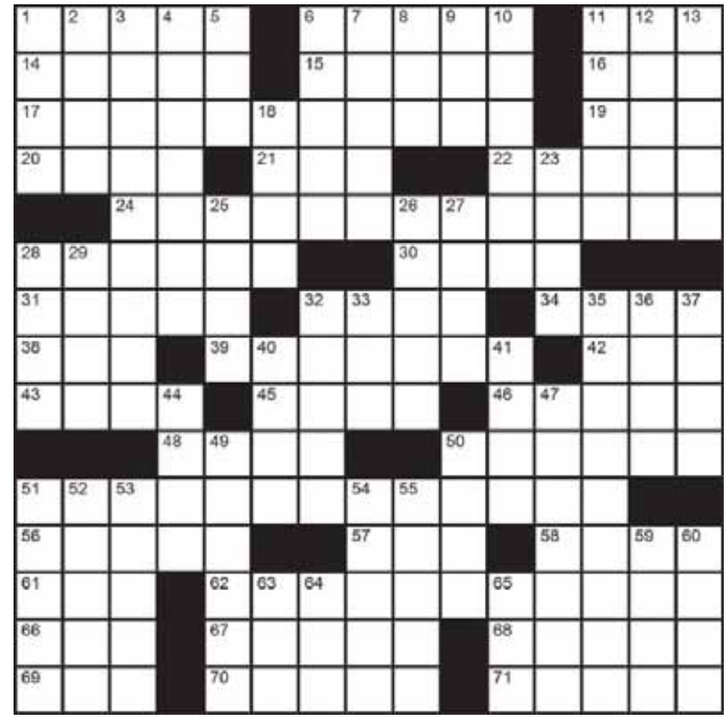
Ingredients
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 to 3 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 3-inch piece of ginger, grated or minced
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 or 3 big handfuls of baby spinach, washed and stems trimmed
- 2 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp cayenne (optional)
- 1 x 28 oz can tomatoes
- 1 x 28 oz can of chickpeas
- 1 cup water
- Pinch of salt

Directions
1. Sauté onions and pinch of salt in oil until they are quite soft, about 10 minutes. Add ginger and garlic and stir for about a minute or two. Add spices and cook for another minute.
2. Add chickpeas and tomatoes. Use the back of a spoon to break up the tomatoes. Add the water and bring to a boil. Add the spinach, reduce heat and simmer for about 15 minutes.
3. Serve over rice and put a dollop of plain yogurt on top.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Robert Redford's "The Natural" (1984) role, Roy __
6. Ms. Abdul
11. Letter-writer's li'l afterthoughts
14. Veggie burger slice
15. "The table __ __!" (Suppertime exclamation)
16. Li'l round rate
17. Ebenezer Scrooge employee: 2 wds.
19. Three vowels
20. Heraldic border
21. Phantom's scare!
22. Edmonton office building, __ Tower
24. Book lover's Christmas decoration: 4 wds.
28. Ms. Tisdale
30. Calgary's prov.
31. Gladiator's 153
32. Lemony
34. Recipe amt.
38. Mr. Bachman
39. Most close by
42. Him, in Hull
43. Arctic birds, Snowy __
45. Very, in Verdun
46. Chicago's airport
48. River of Spain
50. Food store merchant
51. Wildlife in Canada... SARA = __ __ __ Act
56. Christmas song
57. __ Lanka
58. SNL and NASA , e.g.
61. Large truck
62. French log-shaped Christmas dessert: 3 mots
66. Bitty British band
67. Ice Cube, aka __ Jackson
68. When it will be five months from December: 2 wds.
69. East: French
70. Festive fellow, __ Nick
71. __-toothed tiger

DOWN
1. Freight train rider
2. __ about (Circa): 2 wds.
3. Nova Scotia village with a religious sounding name: 2 wds.
4. Celine Dion's "The Prayer" duettist Andrea
5. Grad-to-be, briefly
6. Mountaineer's spike
7. Tie type
8. Show-to-seats, shortly
9. Hawaii garland
10. Certify
11. Cost
12. Sewing kit item
13. Cartoon creature of blue
18. "About _ __" (2002) starring Hugh Grant
23. Fantastic, in slang
25. Sinn __ (Irish republican party)
26. Arctic __ (Northern-hopping critters)
27. Singer/pianist Mr. John's, for short
28. X-__ knife
29. Cabbage dish
32. Tropical tubers
33. "We Three Kings of Orient __"
35. British Columbia ski resort, Whistler __
36. Certain
37. __ 1 Imports
40. Raison d'__
41. Ms. Kelly of song
44. Like dry Spanish wine
47. "Gloria, __ in excelsis!": Latin bit of Christmas song "Ding Dong Merrily on High"
49. The Hobbit character Mr. Baggins, and namesakes
50. Solvers jot down answers to clues in the Crossword's what?
51. Loose rock at a cliff's base
52. Buckets
53. Grain fungus
54. Greyish
55. Special snack
59. Bring up
60. Leonard __, Roy Rogers' birth name
63. Canada's neighbour, commonly
64. Vital life energy
65. '_' __ for Eggnog

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
It's a good time of year for you but it could be great if you stop worrying about what might go wrong and give yourself over to having a fun. Remember that definitions of a good time vary from person to person.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
If someone avoids giving you a straight answer to a perfectly straightforward question, then be on your guard. Take whatever moves are necessary to protect yourself.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Be open about your feelings. Let those who care about you know you care about them too. You can make it hard for loved ones to know what is going on in your heart or your head.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Don't overlook details that may seem minor now but could be of major significance later on. Even the smallest of causes can result in major consequences.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Forget about any setbacks you may have suffered and start looking forward to a time when everything will go right for you again — it won't be long in coming.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you get the chance to prove your critics wrong this week then take it but don't let it consume your every waking thought. Life is much too short to waste time arguing with negative people.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Go where you want to go and do want you want to do this week. No one is going to stop you. You've just got to be free.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Your view of reality seems to be a bit distorted and that could cause problems if you let the line between fact and fantasy get blurred. Be extra careful where money matters are concerned.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You have come through a lot in recent weeks but now you can look back and see there were reasons for everything that happened. Put doubts and fears behind you and act as if all things are possible.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You want to be left alone with your thoughts. Make sure those you live and work with know you need space. If they are not prepared to give it to you then get up and go elsewhere.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you are at a loss as to what to do with yourself, get together with some friends and get involved in an activity that means something to you all. Now is the time for group activities of all kinds but especially those which help other people.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Give your status and reputation some thought now. With a little bit of effort, you can move up in the world rapidly.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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FRIDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers.

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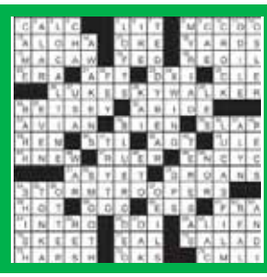

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7	8	4	5	9	6	2	1	3
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